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1962/10/29

General Taylor
(Return to Col. Legere for file)

CUH-448A11

SECRET - EYES ONLY

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29 October 1962

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Daily White House Staff Meeting, 29 October 1962

1. Mr. Kaysen presided throughout the meeting. The DEFCONS all remain at 3, except for SAC which is at 2, and USCINCEUR which is shown as being at 5. Actually, General Norstad has ordered the implementation of a certain number of specific readiness measures by both the US and Allied forces under his command so it is not quite accurate to peg USCINCEUR as being at DEFCON 5, but it is probably close enough to do so.

2. The following matters arose:

a. Captain Shepard quickly briefed the group on quarantine developments in the Caribbean noting that the so-called "quarantine line" is now being modified so that it is no longer the extensive arc of a circle whose center is at the eastern tip of Cuba, but rather a general line out from and more or less parallel to the line of the Bahamas.

b. The group briefly discussed the idea of the President's going on TV after the return from Cuba of U Thant and those who will be accompanying him. There were arguments both ways, and certainly nothing conclusive emerged, but I would say that the consensus was not to plan on such a TV move, but to remain flexible and able to react to events connected with the U Thant mission as they occur.

c. Another general consensus which emerged from an inconclusive discussion was that Berlin is now likely to become a hot spot once again. It was noted that the Chancellor is still planning to arrive on 7 November, and I dare say that the planning for his visit will now step into high gear.

d. Ralph Dungan announced that the representative group of policy-makers from AID would be spending this coming weekend at Camp David in order to take an initial look at where we should try to head during FY 64. Dungan continues to be concerned because the AID people seem constitutionally unable to take a big, over-all, integrative policy look at US

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objectives world-wide and the appropriate amount of foreign aid to support them. Kaysen continues to resist the Dungan idea that all or some members of the NSC staff could help in this matter; Kaysen feels that the Bureau of the Budget is a more logical and effective forum for this kind of review. In short, this Dungan-Kaysen discussion also really got no place.

e. Mike Forrestal noted that somebody (I think he himself, and maybe Arthur Schlesinger) went up to New York yesterday to explore the idea of having the UN take over the problem of Cuban surveillance by putting UN observers on US planes painted white. U Thant turned down this idea last evening (Sunday); meanwhile we are, of course, continuing US surveillance. Tom Parrott noted that no one really knows what happened to the missing aircraft, but the presumption is that it was shot down.

f. Ken Hansen tried to create a little interest in conducting a "Lessons Learned" kind of critique -- e.g., in the so-called "intelligence failures", in the so-called emergency procedures of the government, and in the civil defense area. Kaysen's reaction was that, despite the obvious shortcomings and gaps which the crisis of last week exposed, we would not do anything substantially differently even if we were to start all over again from scratch. I think what he means is that, in civil defense for example, we would still decide not to go into a big national-level crash program because the disadvantages and negative arguments are still as effective as they were before.

HJL
LEGERE

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